

# The Civic Green

## Environmental Happenings in Morgan Hill

Help make Morgan Hill more beautiful by cleaning it up!

Do you need Civic or volunteer hours or do you just want to get involved? Join us on Saturday, March 20th from 9am-12pm for the Great American Litter Pick Up. Groups and individuals are welcome. We'll meet at the Morgan Hill Community Center, 17000 Monterey Road, at 9am to receive clean up assignments. For more information and preregistration, contact Anthony Eulo at 778-6480 or [envron@morganhill.ca.gov](mailto:envron@morganhill.ca.gov)



The seventh annual Earth Day Art & Science Fair will be held at the Community and Cultural Center on Thursday, April 22 from 2-6 pm. All Morgan Hill students (K-12) are invited to enter. This year's theme is "Keep our Creeks Clean!" Students should focus on projects that relate to



## Eating a Sustainable Diet

Choosing the right food can be a confusing process. You want to choose food that is healthy and earth-friendly, but how do you know where the food came from or how it was cultivated? You can make choosing your food less complicated by using these four tips:

### Join a CSA

CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture and the concept is similar to buying shares in the stock market, except your return is fresh, healthy, locally grown food. With a CSA, you purchase shares of the farm's harvest in advance and in return, you get a box of freshly grown vegetables every week. The benefit of becoming part of a CSA farm is that there is less distance between where the food is grown and your plate, making it a more nutritious choice with a lower environmental impact. You're buying food that is in season and the farm is more sustainable because it is growing diverse fruits and vegetables instead of acres of one type of crop. In addition, you get to know the farmer and how your produce is grown. Nearly all CSA farms grow organically. Join-

ing a CSA farm contributes to the success of local farms—which keeps food grown locally and limits imported foods. To find a CSA farm near you, go to:

[www.localharvest.org/csa/](http://www.localharvest.org/csa/), click the CSA tab at the top of the page and type in your zip code for a list of CSA farms serving this area.



### Buying Seasonal Foods

Buying seasonal foods is conducive to living a sustainable lifestyle. Buying seasonal food offers assurances that your food is grown locally. Off season foods usually must travel great distances to get to our stores. This adds to their carbon footprint and often results in less tasty fruits and vegetables. There are many kinds of produce in season right now and in most cases, they are grown locally. Popular late winter, early spring seasonal fruits are apples, tangerines, and grapefruit. Winter and spring seasonal vegetables include onions, cabbage, and broccoli as well as almonds and walnuts. Berries are typically harvested in the summer and early fall in California. If you're popping a grape into your mouth as you read this, it probably didn't come from anywhere near here!

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keeping our creeks and waterways free of litter and contaminants, such as trash and oil. This can include themes and messages about keeping litter off the street or perhaps examining the types of wildlife living in our local creeks. Entry deadline is April 14th. Visit [www.EarthDayArt.com](http://www.EarthDayArt.com) for complete entry details. Thanks go to the Santa Clara Valley Water District for sponsoring this event.

### 12th Annual Environmental Poster Design Contest

Students may enter posters that illustrate the theme "Reduce Your Carbon Footprint". The public will vote on their favorites at the Earth Day Art & Science Fair. First place winners receive \$100. Posters are due by 5pm, on April 9th. Call 778-6480 or visit [www.EarthDayArt.com](http://www.EarthDayArt.com) for more information.



### Join the next Carbon Diet Club In March

In just 3 meetings, learn how to reduce your carbon footprint. Upcoming classes are:

- **Tuesdays**, 3/9-3/23 from 6:30-7:30pm
- **Thursdays**, 3/11-3/25 from 6:30-7:30pm
- **Saturdays**, 3/13-3/27 from 10-11am

Held at the Centennial Recreation Center. Call 782-2128 to pre-register. Child-care is available.

### Growing Your Own Food

Growing your own produce offers a sustainable lifestyle while limiting the amount of carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere. As an added bonus, there certainly is no guesswork as to how the produce was grown.

You, as the farmer get to monitor every step of the cultivation process, choosing which fertilizers, soils and seeds get used. You can make decisions whether to grow organic produce or use varying kinds and amounts of pesticides. As a first time home farmer, the task can



be intimidating with worries of limited time and space. Planter boxes in varying sizes are available for those who want to

grow their own produce but are limited on space. These boxes are usually made of plastics or wood and can be used in back yards or on decks or patios. If time is of concern, watering systems which rely on timers and controls require little effort. Most of these systems can be connected to any household garden

hose, and can be assembled within a half-hour. So, if space and time are of concern, seek out different planting boxes or pots, use a timed watering system then set it, wet it, and watch it grow!



### Eat a vegetarian meal once a week

Eating at least one meal that contains meat a day contributes about 4,745

pounds of greenhouse gas emissions annually (Carbon Diet Handbook, 2006). The best way to begin combating this is to try to replace just one meat meal per week with a vegetarian meal. When a household changes **just one meat meal** per week to a vegetarian meal, 700 pounds of greenhouse gases are spared from the air annually.

Whatever method you employ to create a more sustainable diet for your family, one thing is for sure: eating sustainably is great for improving your health and the environment.

## This Month's Green Living Tip:

### Reduce Your Organic Waste

Are you ready to take recycling to the next level? Give composting a try! Call (408) 916-4640 to learn how to buy a low cost bin or make one of your own. Here are some items that you can compost: **Shredded Paper** of all types and even cardboard can be composted. **Food scraps, grass and garden trimmings** will add much needed nitrogen to your pile. Compost raw veggies, coffee grounds, pasta, fruit rinds and peels. Avoid



oily foods, meat, dairy or animal products. **Water** your compost, but not too much. You want to see a few drops of water when you squeeze the material. If it's too dry, add water throughout the pile while turning. **Let nature do the rest!** Air and sunlight cool and heat your compost to breakdown the organic material. In about 2-3 months your compost will be ready to use as mulch and fertilizer for your garden or lawn.



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